



The Tomosi Group Training Session 2020

Session I:
Sales Training, April 3, 2020



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Leadership Training Series

Introduction

We begin these sessions at a time of tremendous fear in the world on account of the coronavirus spreading through nations. Uganda is under total lockdown for the next 14 days, something unprecedented in recent memory for our nation.

Just to give you some context beyond your own personal, family or business fears and perhaps help you get the wider picture, the **Norwegian Academy of Sciences** in 1976, when I was in primary one in Naama, estimated that since the year 3600BC, there has been over 14,531 wars of all manner and kind that have killed an estimated 3.6bn people, with WWII alone killing an estimated 54m both civilians and military. If we work the numbers, this is only 292 years that can be considered as peaceful in over 5900 years of our human history of civilization. *This means we have had on our planet, about 2.6 wars per year and one year of peace every two decades! Granulating the numbers further, this gives us 36 hours of peace every month or one minute of peace every four hours!* Mankind has been in conflict ever since we learned to speak and use weapons. The shape and form of weapons change but fighting and death and trouble remains.

This is why, if you are believer, you need to know that in the gospel of John 16:33, it says, *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world"*

Reflecting this week on this epidemic, I remembered the years leading up to the March 10, 1900 Buganda agreement. In the kingdoms of Nkore, Bunyoro, Busongora and parts of north western Buganda, the years 1892 to 1894 saw an outbreak of rinderpest that decimated livestock causing economic deprivation; it was followed by a jigger infestation especially in Nkore denying food to an already starved population and soon after, this was followed by small pox and on the heels of this last calamity, the British invasion, using collaborators, a majority from Buganda. By 1899, the major kingdoms' resistance was broken at Kongai subcounty, Dokolo district of Lango with the capture of both Mwanga and Kabalega in April of that year. Specifically, in Nkore, a man called McAllister, a retired captain serving the IBEACo transformed his title from collector of taxes in this impoverished population emerging from war with the Rwanda kingdom and two epidemics to District commissioner by 1897, a title adopted by the Uganda public service till 1986. It was no surprise, therefore, that in nine months, an agreement to end the ancient Buganda kingdom was signed with the British.

This agreement gave a beach head, a sort of wind behind the colonization effort to attack all other smaller kingdoms of what would later be known as Uganda. None of these kingdoms existed in its old form and shape by the break out of WWI. One can, therefore, argue in the natural and in the spiritual realm that the epidemics heralded the end of the old order and the birth of a new order, whether Ugandan kingdoms liked it or not or whichever side the leaders of the time stood – either as resistors or collaborators.



In the 120 years since this milestone of the Buganda agreement, I cannot recall a time when we have had a total lockdown, the breadth and depth we have instituted in Uganda in the last couple of days.

Not during the peasant revolts of the 1920s over the issue of rent charges by land lords from the Bibanja holders that produced the Busuulu and Envujjo laws in 1928, not during Ignatius Musaza and the 1949 riots in Katwe over the right of African farmers to sell cotton and coffee directly, riots that birthed the initial fervor for political parties and independence, not the Obote attack on Lubiri in 1967 and the abrogation of the independence constitution, not the Idi Amin take over in January 1971, not the overthrow of Amin in April 1979, not military division of Kampala under several warlords at the end of 1985, not during the war against Joseph Kony up to 2006. In all these phases, we have never had this kind of total country lockdown. This is unprecedented. It is a sign of the changing times and perhaps the birth of a new season. Rather than being taken down by fear, I would rather we reflect deeper, study more the meaning of these circumstances, analyze and pray and work hard at planning for the various adaptations in life, in our businesses, in social-cultural and spiritual realms for the change. We got to be ready as businesses and as country!

Example: Let us assume for the last forty years your company has been in the large scale shipping and transportation business. Since the year 1980 when China introduced economic reforms, this is probably the only industry that has had a 10 percent annual compounded rate of growth on account of increased global trading patterns. Your company owns a fleet of large cargo ships that carry up to 180,000MTs in one lifting.

These ships carry coal, coke, steel etc. to power your growing industries in your home country. You rent one ship to customers at a cost of USD25,000 per day and you pay your crew up to USD7000 a day in fees. Suddenly a global health pandemic breaks out and the shipping industry grinds to a halt! What do you sell to remain in business?



Unfortunately, this is not a hypothetical example. It is the true picture of the industry since February 2020. The hire price for these large cargo ships dropped to USD2500, just 10% of their original price, money not enough to keep the crew on the ships for a single day. They are grounded.

There is a term for this kind of situation in life and in business. It is called a **'Sinkhole Moment'**.

"Sinkholes occur when underground streams drain away during seasons of drought, causing the ground at the surface to lose its underlying support. Suddenly everything simply caves in, leaving people with a freighting suspicion that nothing – not even the earth beneath their feet – is trustworthy".



Sometimes running a business in difficult times, can feel this way.

This means to avoid this kind of situation or to adapt when it strikes, a business must be a **hatchery** of good products, **Instead of simply relying on selling eggs, a chicken farmer is concerned with the quality of the birds that lay the eggs.** must have the versatility to turn on one leg in the middle of a crisis and introduce new ways of doing old things or bring fresh products that are iterations of the old ones.



Hatcheries also tend to be 'war zones'. The stronger birds fight the weak ones for survival. Either way, selling these products (which I define as the art of uncovering the needs of the market and convincing buyers to take the products of one's creativity), requires a trained team that works in a symbiotic manner.

The Human Resource Department must raise and recruit the right qualifications from the labour market and build the best attitude among the people, the Accounts Department as store keepers of the beans harvested daily or monthly, must facilitate the exercise of selling by providing a clear understanding of why every cost centre must be matched with a revenue/profit centre, the company leadership e.g. Dwaniro and, the Chief executive officer (CEO) must lead the entire orchestra and know which strands of the instruments must be played when and why. He/she must know why some instruments aren't producing good sound. He/she must seek to improve the individual and overall team performance, especially in the quality of their output. The CEO must demonstrate why each **one of us must be a salesperson** for the company lest, no reason for us being together unless there is a return from each other's effort combined.

To sell, we must begin with a full understanding of the **product** in our hands.

- What are the characteristics, what features, what benefits to customers of the service you offer?
- a) How is this product different from what the competition offers? As I speak to you, I am holding five different products from five different companies all serving the same purpose at different times of the day, in my opinion – they cure thirst and hunger.



b) I have Rwenzori water from Nile breweries, a beer company, Minute Maid Mango juice, a brand of Coca Cola, a company that serves sugar mixed with water, Happy Day Blackcurrant juice, a product from Hungary that sells a little more than 1000shs more than what we produce locally, straw beery flavored Milk from Jesa and Vanilla flavored yorhut from Milkman, a product of Vital Tomosi Dairy. Just to remind you, I do not need to use all these products in combination to cure hunger and thirst. The worst case scenario is that I can use only water in all these products.

- i. All the products carry flavors
 - a. they all carry varying sugar level
 - b. they all stay longer on the shelf for various length of time the shortest being yoghurt.

These products are sold to me differently to make a basket of what I buy regularly, largely because of the following reasons:

- a) I have young children with varied tastes and preferences, they take more per day than older people,
- b) The products price ranges from UGX1000-8000 a range in which I do not need to simply buy one type but can choose a variety
- c) Their branding is attractive to children
- d) Sugar is not too much of an issue to the children at their age now given they burn a lot of calories running at school and at home.

The differentiation, therefore, for each of the products for me is really **the brand** and nothing much of value; but, I still buy. What's interesting to the session, is I could get many of these products made at home. I could squeeze the juice myself as we do in our kitchen with lemons and beetroot ([use the pictures here of beetroot, lemons](#)). Why I can't do all is that the consumers of these brands reside in our house and, therefore, I have to alter their tastes and preferences as they grow older. That takes time and preparation. We will explain this better when we speak about Brand and Marketing in our coming sessions. For now, let us just say, you must know your product so well, who likely will consume it in order to state thinking of the selling process. Not every creation can be a product with a market potential.

What is your product and what knowledge do you have of it? People buy from people not necessarily from companies.

The above question answers the next two:

- What is your target market?
- What is your perceived niche and how did you arrive at it?

The above exercise is necessary for the salesperson to define the market in such a way that neither do they spread themselves thinly trying to 'look the act' nor hold to a service that has a dwindling and/or no long term exploitable market.

There are four stages to a sales call I would like us now to consider:

- 1) **Preliminary stage:** This is where a seller makes an impression on the buyer's mind. Your confidence levels, your training, your understanding of the product as earlier explained, matter a lot here. This stage can be conducted on phone or physically if you are lucky to be granted an appointment. This is where your language and command of good communication is tested, your dress style, your experience and many other externalities that a buyer will see or hear for them to make a better impression of you. Please be careful to prepare for this stage whether by letter, telephone or face to face.

Investigative stage: This is where a seller uncovers the needs of the potential buyer – both the expressed ones such as, "I need a security system for my company" and the possible un-expressed ones such as "I need an audit of our security system to get a reliable and sustainable solution". In the first instance, the buyer probably wants to hire a guard while in the second, the buyer might want a full understanding of the options available to them to give them a full measure of peace of mind that their staff are safe and other assets protected. Un-expressed needs are much more powerful that good salespeople aim at these from the start. This is almost like a salesperson is leading the potential buyer on a self-discovery journey. By unveiling these un-expressed needs, one has an opportunity to sell more than what one came for. Un-expressed concerns bring out the emotional aspects of the buyer.

Example: why would a lady buy two more pairs of shoes when she has more shoes in the closet not yet worn. The answer could be 'buying shoes is a hobby' or she stocks up for different occasions- both of these answers are an expression of emotional needs not the lack of shoes by the buyer.

The other example is what I saw at Shell Bbunga in Kampala, this week. An announcement of lockdown at 10pm triggered a mad rush at this little sleepy corner shop I use very late when I am going home. The shop normally has no queues or traffic. This time, none of us could get to the ATM machine nearby. Inside the shop, a man was packing up trays of eggs on top of the other, the type that goes bad if you do not eat them soon. I obviously did not inquire about the size of his family but he clearly looked a sort of unusual buyer at this location. The cashiers were so overwhelmed with the traffic of shoppers that they lost their usual customer service composure and feel. The true picture is that the lockdown got the gentleman *worried about tomorrow - an emotional feel* - yet the corner shop wasn't going to run out of stock the next day. As a matter of fact, I went back the next day to find all that had been picked in a rush, had been restocked to the full. Did he need to pack up many trays of eggs? No. But out of fear, he spent more than usual. This stage of the sales process uncovers difficulties and dissatisfactions that potential customers might have, the impact of the buyer on their income and/or profitability etc. if a decision is made. It is this stage where professional salespeople show the potential buyers the kind of positive impact whether on their bottom-line or other aspects of their life, their solution would provide

- 2) **Demonstration of Capabilities stage:** This is where the seller clearly shows their solutions to the needs expressed by the last two stages. The questions of price, the seller's delivery time, their mobilization time if it is a service requiring advance preparation such as road construction, security deployment, factory production time etc. This stage shows the clear value-add the seller's product brings
- 3) **Obtaining Commitment stage:** Here, the buyer gives consent to the seller that they are willing to move to the consideration of purchase stage especially if this is large sale. The buyer at this stage probably wants to inspect the seller's solution or watch a live demo or whatever choice the buyer has made ahead of the final decision. This is the stage where we deal with attitudes on both sides of the seller and the buyer, decision making on both sides in regards to particular aspects of the transaction, indecisions and delays and comparisons, even sometimes corruption in certain agencies that won't buy unless some officials are paid cuts. This is where values are truly seen or lost.

To conclude, let us note the following as a recap:

- a) Difficult times demand **adjustment** and new ways of doing things. Difficult times can **signal us out of the normal noise** that there is a new era dawning and we need to open our eyes to the opportunity any crisis presents. Do not fear difficult times, rather be more concerned with what you are doing today, how you are doing it and whether you are growing through it
- b) You must have **a product**, reliable that solves a particular need on the market. You must understand the product so well that you are able to help the customer understand it in a similar manner that we do

- c) You must try and **explore more needs** the customer might have than just the expressed ones he/she has verbalized or advertised. This will need you to work at your approach to clients and your depth of investigation before you rush to demonstrate your solution. You must aim correctly and not jump to conclusion on customer needs.
- d) Please understand that the four stages mentioned are simply a **guideline** to help you think through sales approach and not a strict code that you must go through in the same ascending order.
- e) Please know that **big sales are different from small sales**. Example: when we were asked to raise a certain amount of money for the AFWA conference from a list of potential corporates, our approach could not be the same as selling a liter of milk or a guarding service. While the fundamentals remain largely similar, big sales require a deeper understanding of the buyer, some very good communication approach, a level of authority and commitment at your company level. A big sale can take so longer that you want to manage the stages carefully to not fall of the rails in the process opening a window for the competition to get in.

Questions:

Please answer and send these on email

- 1) What do you think is the most important stage among the four and why?
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- 2) If you have tried to conduct a sale of any kind in the company you work for, what has been your greatest hindrance or challenge?
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- 3) How has this session helped you improve the odds of making a sale next time?
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Our next session will be on Friday April 10, 2020 at 11am